



Gwen Sheinfeld - Prepare for the launch of LEED for existing buildings

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Healthy Buildings is preparing building owners and managers for participation in volume certification in anticipation of the launch of the LEED EBOM Volume Program in mid-2011. This article provides tips to assist groups preparing to engage in volume certification.

Key strategies:

- * Develop a clear strategy, grounded in a logical flow of actions and responsible parties.
- * Coordinate extremely organized systems at both the building and portfolio level.
- * Select credits to pursue, when to pursue them, and a responsible party for ongoing documentation.

Features of EBOM Volume Certification:

- * Flexibility to design prototype strategies according to an organization's group of buildings and management structure.
- * When an organization has management similarities across a group of buildings, it can leverage similarities to facilitate a streamlined LEED documentation process.

Project management support:

Engage a team to participate in the development and implementation of the program. Volume participants identify a prototype administrator to develop pre-certification and ongoing certification submittals for USGBC/GBCI, create documentation tools, manage volume project teams, provide training, and perform quality control of building-level documentation. In addition, an outside consultant is very helpful in guiding the process.

Development of precertification package for submittal to USGBC:

Unlike an individual certification program, volume participants must prepare and submit a prototype precertification package to USGBC/GBCI to seek approval for the strategic approach. A Quality Control Plan, education plan, and prototype credit documentation are developed to account for the characteristics of a group of buildings. Precertification submissions outline how the participant will manage pre-performance period activities, performance period dates, post-performance period data analysis, and team training. The precertification package requires a description of the tools to facilitate the process, education and training of building staff, credit documentation (including building-level and portfolio-level tools), and the quality control process.

Program tools:

The LEED Volume Program provides flexibility in the tools and formats that participants use to document projects.

Below are examples of building-level and portfolio-level program tools that can be used as part of the quality control and education plans, and help to track ongoing performance.

Procedures Manual

USGBC will release customer guidance documents on program procedures and submittals.

However, it can be advantageous for volume participants to create their own procedures manuals, as part of their Quality Control Plan, to provide organization-specific program details. Similar to the LEED reference guides, a procedures manual outlines credit intent and requirements, procedures and documentation requirements and sample narratives.

Credit Compliance Tools

Instead of requiring volume participants to exclusively use LEED credit forms, the Volume Program allows organizations to define their own tools for verifying achievement. The prototype administrator can design customized credit compliance tools to mimic aspects of LEED credit forms, while leveraging building and management similarities to streamline the documentation process.

Policies and Plans

Volume participants can develop standardized policies and plans tailored to operational practices which meet prerequisite and/or credit requirements. Policies and plans can be vetted at a corporate or portfolio level to ensure consistency with existing policies for the company's building operations and maintenance practice and foster institutionalization into company culture.

Metrics Digest

A digest report can be developed to provide a snapshot view of credit achievement across the group. This tool can help assess performance through a high-level summary, provide updates to the prototype administrator on the certification status of the group, and indicate which buildings need attention.

Web-based trainings

In order to ensure successful implementation, prototype administrators or their consultants can conduct web-based trainings. Initially, teams often need training on green building basics and the rating system requirements. Performance period training should cover maintaining credit documentation requirements and quality control.

For more information, please visit www.usgbc.org/leedvolume, and stay tuned for more information on the LEED Volume Program for Existing Buildings: Operations and Maintenance.

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